



Development

# Ex-tire store to become retail center

By Kevin Walters

American Staff Writer

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A Jackson developer plans to spend about \$1 million on converting the former Big 10 tire store into a shopping center in Hattiesburg.

"I'm pretty much totally reinvigorating it and turning it into an upper-scale retail shopping center; it's going to be extremely nice," Bridgforth Rutledge said Thursday. "I think the area, although it went through some rough times, is rebounding well."

"There's a lot of demand for space out there," he said. "And this will, I believe, be one of the nicer renovated buildings in Hattiesburg."

Rutledge, who has developed properties around Jackson, said he will call the new center the Market at Cloverleaf.

Barring bad weather, Rutledge expects work to be completed within two months on the 9,200-square-foot building.

Rutledge said he has secured tenants for a majority of the spaces. He confirmed that a Cellular South store has signed a lease in the building and will be the primary business.

There are discussions with other possible tenants, including a restaurant, but Rutledge could not elaborate.

"As far as the mall, it brings more retail to the center. It'll complement the other retail we've got."

—Steve Floyd

Steve Floyd, whose company manages the Cloverleaf Center, said the new retail center will possibly have four or five shops that could accommodate retailers who want to be near the U.S. 49 intersection but might not want a space in the center.



Floyd

"As far as the mall, it brings more retail to the center," Floyd said. "It'll complement the other retail we've got."

Rutledge said he has high hopes for the potential of the strip mall, citing its prime location.

"It's got such good access and proximity to the interstate," Rutledge said. "When some development happens, that spurs other development. ... This is the logical progression for this area. I think it's long overdue for this area to do what it is doing."

"It's got such good access and proximity to the interstate," Rutledge said. "When some development happens, that spurs other development. ... This is the logical progression for this area. I think it's long overdue for this area to do what it is doing."

■ Cloverleaf, 1A



Special to the American

Artist's rendering of the Market at Cloverleaf.

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HATTIESBURG, MS

**Circulation = 26509**

**DAILY**

06/11/2004



**American Staff Writer**

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Both Cellular South, headquartered in Jackson, and the Little Rock, Ark.-based Airtel have each spent millions of dollars to install new towers in the area and update their networks to expand the volume of Hattiesburg-area users, company officials say.

and updated equipment, spending \$1.8 million during the past six months in Forrest, Lamar and Perry counties, said Jim Richmond, the company's director of sales.

The company also drove the creation of a new Cellular South retail location in Hattiesburg in the former Big 10 Tire location near the Cloverleaf Center, Richmond said, going as far as finding a developer willing to renovate

"I think that side of town will be really good for us," Richmond said.

Phoe estimated the average cost of building out a tower was about \$250,000 each.

### Its Cellular XI. properties

"The 12 counties that we acquired through Cellular XL helped us bridge the gap through all those properties," Phee said.

"When we're in Hattiesburg"

Richmond said he anticipates adding one or two more towers in the future to keep up with customer demand in the area.

"We're really doing all those (changes) to stay ahead," Richmond said. "We don't want to get to a point where we have customers who are unable to use their cell phones. By doing this expansion it helps us stay ahead of the game."

Both companies touted their declining churn rates - the per-

percentage of users who switch wireless carriers annually.

Cellular South's is 1.7 percent in the first quarter of 2004, down from 2.1 percent in late 2003 while Alltel's was 1.93 percent during the same period, down from 1.96 percent in late 2003.

The Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association reports that the national average for churn rates is 33 percent and there are 164,851,051 wireless users in the U.S.

# MAGNOLIA

## CLIPPING SERVICE

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MS BUSINESS JOURNAL

JACKSON, MS

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WEEKLY

06/14/2004



### Cellular South customers using CDMA

49 JACKSON — With the completion of its \$38-million expansion of its CDMA 1XRTT network during the first quarter of 2004, Cellular South launched a new marketing campaign to encourage its customers to upgrade to the newer technology. According to the wireless telecommunications company, efforts appear to be working.

In the third quarter of 2003, 46% of Cellular South customers utilized TDMA technology, and as of the first quarter of 2004, that number has declined to 27%, reflecting the swift move to the CDMA network.

Cellular South said it plans to launch its data application services on its CDMA 1X network in the third quarter of this year. The company will offer an array of BREW (binary runtime environment for wireless) services and picture messaging.

"Now that we have elevated our system to a level where we have significantly improved call clarity and reduced our dropped call rate, we're introducing enhanced 1X games, photos and Internet email," said Hu Meena, president of Cellular South.

SCOTT CO TIMES  
FOREST, MS  
Circulation = 4831

WEEKLY  
06/16/2004



THE TIMES/CHRIS ALLEN BAKER

Construction workers drilled into a clearing last week between the Kansas City Railroad and Front Street near the overhead bridge in preparation for installing a new cell phone tower. CellularSouth officials said Tuesday the construction was halted when problems with the soil were discovered that could impact the tower stability. A search for a new site is in progress.

## New Cellular Tower Rising Downtown

**UNEXPECTED DELAY COULD  
MOVE LOCATION OF JOB**

By CHRIS ALLEN BAKER  
TIMES NEWS EDITOR

FOREST—Some cell phone users are expected to get an extra boost in range and signal strength when a new tower is installed in the downtown area within a few weeks.

Construction began earlier this month on a site between Front Street and the Kansas City Southern Railroad. Construction workers were seen drilling in a clearing near the overhead bridge for placing the tower's underground anchor.

**"Leasing space to other providers  
is a possibility depending  
on the amount of space  
available and the impact it would  
have on the tower."**

—Shane Tuttle, CellularSouth spokesman,  
after admitting that most cellular providers struggle  
to provide adequate service in the city

Shane Tuttle, a spokesman for CellularSouth, said last week that the cell phone company intends to place a tower in the downtown area. However, construction may take longer than originally planned.

Tuttle said construction was halted when a problem with the soil in that area was discovered that could affect the stability of the tower.

"We have basically stopped and will have to look for a new site and start over," Tuttle said. "The tower could end up just a few hundred feet from the original site or it could be somewhere else. We remain committed to installing a tower by the end of the year."

The 200-foot tower was expected to take four to six weeks to install, but that timetable has been extended, Tuttle said.

The tower installation is a result of concerns about service in the area for cell phone users who may not have received consistently strong signals on

Please see CELLULAR, 7A

## CELLULAR

From Page 7A

their phones. Tuttle said most of the towers have been along interstates but this will be the first tower in downtown Forest.

"This tower will help significantly with signal strength," Tuttle said. "Like other service providers, we have struggled in providing the best coverage for

Forest."

Although CellularSouth will own the tower, Tuttle said other cellular service providers could use the tower and extend their coverage in the area.

"Leasing space to other providers is a possibility depending on the amount of space available and the impact it would have on the tower," Tuttle said. Companies sharing towers is a common practice in many areas.

he said.

"We would consider leasing space to anyone interested in doing so," Tuttle said.

With the presence of a new tower, Tuttle said options are open for a stronger retail presence in Forest and Scott County.

"There are no definite plans for a store there but looking at new markets and possibilities are things we are always considering," Tuttle said.

# MAGNOLIA

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PANOLIAN  
BATESVILLE, MS  
Circulation = 4846

WEEKLY  
06/18/2004



## *New place, same great service*



The Panolian photo by Jason C. Mattox

The Cellular South office in Batesville recently celebrated its grand re-opening at their new location on Lakewood Drive. Present for the ribbon cutting were (in no order) Cellular South Team Leader Justin Tarplay, Cellular South Market Manager Clinton Shove, Cellular South Area Manager Shane Tuttle, Panola Partnership CEO Blair Jernigan, Little Miss Batesville Maddie Sullivant, Miss Hospitality Whitney Prather, Mayor Bobby Baker, Redcoat Ambassadors, city and county officials, State Representative Leonard Morris and friends.

## MAGNOLIA

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STONE CO ENTERPRISE

WIGGINS, MS

Circulation = 2881

WEEKLY

06/30/2004

NOV 11 2004 11:00 AM

# Cellular South to open new store in Wiggins

496  
Cellular South, one of the nation's largest privately held wireless companies, will relocate from its Radio Shack/Wiggins location on July 5th, to a new, larger store in Wiggins at 1111 E. Frontage Rd. (next to Popeyes). The Stone County Economic Development Partnership/Chamber and Cellular South will hold a grand opening celebration and ribbon

cutting on Friday, July 16, at 10 a.m.

"Cellular South offers a different kind of wireless service based on the simple premise that customers have rights, including the right to the best network available, and service and pricing that is fair and makes sense," said Richard Reynolds, Cellular South area manager.

Offering more than just lip

service to providing a "network that works," Cellular South recently invested \$38 million in a regional network expansion, which includes the addition of more than 100 new cell sites in its wireless markets and the extension of its CDMA IX third generation digital wireless network to Coastal Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. The company's CDMA IX network has

increased by twenty percent and now provides seamless coverage from Memphis, Tennessee, Mississippi, Coastal Alabama and the Florida Panhandle to Destin. With its network now 100 percent CDMA IX, capacity for voice and data traffic is in place to support the company's groundbreaking flat-rate \$49.99 per month Unlimited Calling Plan, unlimited text messaging

service and plans for rollout of enhanced wireless data services.

"Just in time for summer travel, Mississippi customers can increase their local calling area to include popular vacation destinations such as Destin, Florida and Gulf Shores, Alabama," added Reynolds.

Wiggins store hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.

to 5 p.m. All retail locations are closed on Sunday.

Cellular South supports the Lifeline Assistance program in Mississippi designed to make phone services available to qualifying applicants receiving income-based benefits. Cellular South provides this program so that wireless service is affordable for all Mississippians.

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**PROGRESS**  
PONTOTOC, MS  
Circulation = 6283

**WEEKLY**  
**06/30/2004**



## **Cellular South expands coverage**

496  
Cellular South has just completed construction of two digital wireless communications towers which will improve wireless call quality and coverage in the Pontotoc area.

The towers are located on Highway 15 N. and Bridgman Loop. The new towers allow Cellular South customers and other wireless users to enjoy improved clarity and enhanced wireless coverage.

# **MAGNOLIA**

**CLIPPING SERVICE**

(801) 856-0911 / (205) 758-8610

**BANNER-INDEPENDENT**

**BOONEVILLE, MS**

Circulation = 5000

**WEEKLY**

**07/01/2004**



## ***Wireless coverage will improve***

496  
Cellular South has just completed construction of a new digital wireless communications tower which will improve wireless call quality and coverage in the Booneville area.

Located on North Third Street, the new tower allows Cellular South customers and other wireless users to enjoy improved clarity and enhanced wireless coverage.

With the recent completion of a \$38 million expansion of its CDMA 1XRTT network, Jackson, Mississippi-based Cellular South has added more than 100 cell sites to enhance and extend its network since September 2003. In the last five years, Cellular South has invested more than \$260 million in network improvements.



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**SUN-HERALD**  
**BILOXI, MS**  
Circulation = 56643

**DAILY**  
**07/04/2004**



**Cellular South moves to new location**

496  
Cellular South is now in its new location at 223 Winter St. in Lucedale. The business offers a flat-rate per month unlimited calling plan, unlimited text messaging service and plans for rollout of enhanced wireless data services. Business hours are 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday-Friday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday. Details: 1 (877) CSOUTH1.

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UNION APPEAL

UNION, MS

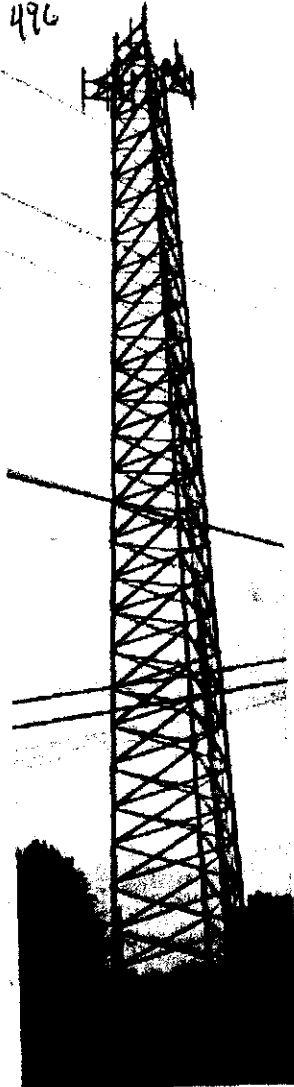
Circulation = 2390

WEEKLY

07/07/2004



496



**Improved  
Reception...**

Cellular South has erected three new digital wireless communications towers which will improve cell phone quality and coverage in the Union area.

Two towers are located in the southern part of Neshoba County and the one pictured above on Old Decatur Road is located in Newton County.

## MAGNOLIA

CLIPPING SERVICE

(601) 856-0911 / (205) 758-8910

THE INDEPENDENT

HATTIESBURG, MS

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WEEKLY

07/08/2004



# Medicaid debate prompts local volunteers to act

Like many Mississippians, Bud Cervantes does not fully understand the state's Medicaid controversy.

Few completely do.

But Cervantes and several other Hattiesburg area residents do not intend to let that stop them from helping the thousands of area residents who are affected by impending changes to the programs.

Each weekday, Cervantes, AARP representative Joe Yore, and others head to Forrest General Hospital's Insurance Operations Department office on South 25th Avenue to assist hundreds of Pine Belt residents with questions about changes to their prescription drug coverage.

On September 15, 65,000 elderly and disabled Mississippians, the majority of whom are also eligible under the federal Medicare program, will be

booted from Medicaid roles, a move Governor Haley Barbour says is necessary to gain control of a bloated Medicaid budget.

While an estimated 60,000 of the 65,000 will maintain health coverage under Medicare,

only a limited amount of prescription drug coverage is available for those Mississippians. While Gov. Barbour says thousands of drugs are available from drug companies for free or under \$15, the changes to the program have caused some lawmakers, many of whom originally voted in favor of the governor's plan, as well

as residents across the state to criticize the move. Some have even been moved to a panic.

Cervantes, Yore and others are hoping to ease some of that panic by helping connect drug companies to Mississippians who expect to lose prescription drug coverage.

"We're doing the best we can to find companies that offer free medications," Cervantes says. "Every day people who are concerned bring information on how to get free and reduced prescription drugs."

Yore estimates there are 1,300 pharmacies that offer free or significantly reduced prescriptions. Whether drug companies make good on their offers, however, he's not certain.

"That's a lot of what we're trying to do," he says. "We're trying to figure out which of these companies will come

through."

Cervantes says the drug companies can rescind their offers at any time.

He encourages people seeking assistance to first collect as much information for themselves, then if they have questions,

come by the office located at 107 S. 25th Ave. The Medicare hotline is 1-800-633-4227. By calling that number, Medicare recipients can be assisted by Medicare professionals and be sent a personalized prescription drug book. While Cervantes, Yore and the other volunteers have received cellular phones donat-

ed by Cell South for their cause, the hundreds of daily calls the volunteers receive make it impossible for them to answer each one. Calls to the cell phones are being answered by a message that refers callers to the Medicare hotline.

"People are going to have to help themselves," Cervantes said. "No one else will. We want to encourage people to collect the information themselves. If they don't understand something, then ask."

Both Cervantes and Yore say they have been surprised by the number of inquiries they've received.

"When we first set up we thought we'd be sitting here from 9 a.m.-noon talking to each other," said Cervantes, who estimates the volunteers received 150 calls the first day following a news report

announcing their willingness to help.

"We're not professionals," he added. "The only thing we can do is give them information to help themselves. But they're going to have to do a lot on their own. They need to make the calls."

The service group is still searching for volunteers, especially those with computer skills. To volunteer, visit the office, and if no one is available, leave a name and phone number. Cervantes says a volunteer will call as help is needed.

"We hope we giving people hope that somebody is looking after them," Cervantes said. "Things will change, but we're trying to help with the transition."

Volunteers are scheduled to occupy the office each day, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

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**GEORGE CO TIMES**  
LUCEDALE, MS  
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WEEKLY  
07/08/2004



George County Times

# Business Review

*If you feel you have information relevant to the George County Times' Business Review, please contact us at (601)947-2967. Though some exclusions to releases will apply, we want to hear from you! Note: Articles will be run according to space available.*



## **Cellular South Opens New Office...**

Participating in the grand opening of Cellular South's new office location on Mill St. are left to right, Richard Reynolds (Area Manager), Michelle Eubanks, (ASR Sales), Teresa Davis (Team leader), Mark Prince (Market Manager) and Doreen Hill (Retail Sales Manager).

# MAGNOLIA CLIPPING SERVICE

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HATTIESBURG AMERICAN

HATTIESBURG, MS  
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DAILY

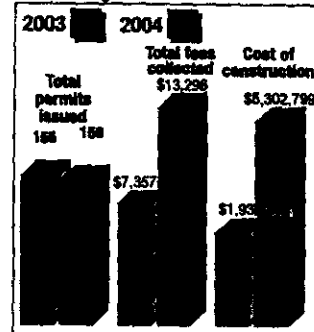
07/11/2004



## Weekly development update

Each week the *Hattiesburg American* publishes a map updating some of the new development in the Hattiesburg area. The information is collected from city of Hattiesburg planning records and Forrest and Lamar county planners. If you see something we've missed, contact Staff Writer Kevin Walters at 584-3118 or by e-mail at [KWalters@hattiesb.gannett.com](mailto:KWalters@hattiesb.gannett.com)

### Hattiesburg construction in June



### New developments

● **Best Buy:** Electronics retailer Best Buy will open a store in Hattiesburg this fall in the former Delchamps grocery store on Hardy Street. It will employ 80 people.

● **The Campus Pointe:** A \$17-million, 240-unit apartment complex has received approval from the Hattiesburg Planning Commission. The project would be built on 21 acres of land along North 31st Avenue and still needs approval from the City Council before work is to commence.

● **Best TV:** The electronics and appliance store will move from its longtime location along U.S. 49 to the 30,000-square-foot former Factory 2-U store adjacent to Toys R Us along U.S. 98. It will open in early August.

● **The Market at Cloverleaf:** A Jackson developer plans to spend about \$1 million on converting the former Big 10 tire store into a shopping

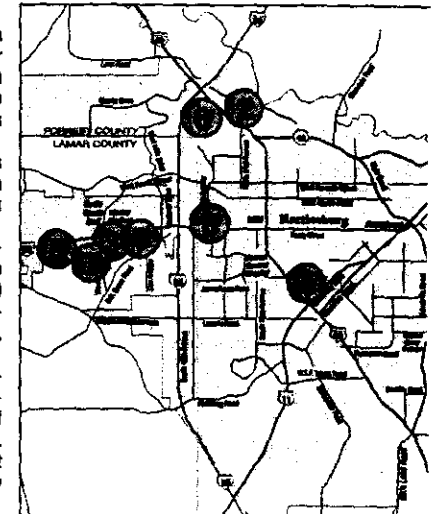
center in Hattiesburg.

● **Wal-Mart:** will launch a Walmart.com customer service center in Convergys' former 350-seat facility in Cloverleaf Center after buying out the remaining two years on the company's lease in April.

● **Broadmore Theater:** The theater's owners plan to expand their six-screen theater later this year into a 14-screen multiplex with stadium seating as well.

● **Cellular South:** The Mississippi-based cellular company has built six to eight new cellular towers and updated equipment, spending \$1.8 million during the past six months in Forrest, Lamar and Perry counties.

● **Alltel:** The Arkansas cellular company which purchased the wireless operation and customer accounts of Hattiesburg-based Cellular XL Associates in mid-2003, has spent about \$10 million installing four new towers of its own.



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**OXFORD EAGLE**

**OXFORD, MS**

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**DAILY**

**07/12/2004**



**Cellular South<sup>496</sup>**  
**increases coverage**

Cellular South has recently completed construction of a new digital wireless communications tower which will improve wireless call quality and coverage in the Oxford area.

The new tower is located near the Beacon Restaurant on North Lamar Boulevard. The company has invested more than \$260 million in network improvements in the past five years.

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**DESOTO CO TRIBUNE**  
**OLIVE BRANCH, MS**  
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**WEEKLY**  
**07/15/2004**



## Olive Branch gets a Cellular South store

Cellular South is opening a new retail store at 8120 Camp Creek Boulevard today. *uaw*

Events will run from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a ribbon cutting at noon.

There will be refreshments, a RiverKings hockey shoot, Xplorer cheerleaders, animal visits from the Memphis Shelby County Humane Society and a moon bounce.

FM-100's Ron Olson will give away prizes, including tickets to see Lyle Lovett.

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ENTERPRISE JOURNAL

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DAILY  
07/18/2004

ISSN 1044-5861

# Cellular South's renovated lobby popular with customers

496  
BY DAVE PARKER  
ENTERPRISE JOURNAL

It's really saying something when a local franchise is selected to stand out from the rest.

That's the case with the local Cellular South in McComb. The local store recently underwent major renovations to its lobby and customer service area. Before, customers walked in and could browse inventory and accessories.

That's still the case. But the large customer service desk has been removed. Instead of sales associates waiting on customers behind the desk, customers are greeted at the door.

Customers now have access to interactive phone displays, an array of wireless phones and accessories and other innovative services at a payment kiosk.

"Cellular South offers a different kind of wireless service based on the premise that customers have rights, including the right to a network that works," said Scott Watson, local Cellular South market manager. "We've taken that philosophy one step further with our new store design to create an improved wireless retail experience for our customers including more wireless options, a customer care center and a self-service payment kiosk."

According to a company press release, as of mid-May, all calls to the local McComb store have been



In the left photo, Dr. Ted Malone stands with fellow workers at his new location on Delaware Avenue. Pictured are, from left, optometric assistants Eric Honea and Ammie Duncan, Malone

rerouted to the "voice response unit" in the Meadville office and will be handled by customer care associates depending on the call. With fewer calls coming into the store, employees will have more time to service customers.

In other business happenings in the area:

• **THE SUMMIT SUN** has returned — though it's not a newspaper. Summit Sun is a new tanning salon located at 807 Robb St. in Summit. Its grand opening was Friday and features six standard tanning beds and one stand-up booth. It's open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays, said co-owner Cody Iupe.

Also opening soon will be **THE**

**FIELD HOUSE**, Iupe said, and it will feature sporting goods for all sports. It is set to open in mid-August or early September.

• McComb native Shannon Aleman opened **PLANET BEACH** on June 7 at 653 Delaware Ave. in McComb. Aleman's brother, Stephen Smith, an early 1980s Parklane graduate, started Planet Beach in New Orleans in 1995 and a year later began franchising, with locations in the U.S., Canada and Australia.

The McComb Planet Beach has five tanning beds, two stand-up booths and features the Mystic spray tan.

• **SUBCULTURES** opened its doors at 813 Robb St. in Summit on July 1. The business specializes in al-



AARON RHODES | ENTERPRISE JOURNAL

and manager Connie Johnson. In the photo at right, Cellular South employee Sandra Young, left, greets customer Trisha Whalen inside the store's renovated lobby.

ternative clothing, club wear, and hand-crafted jewelry. retro and vintage clothing, music and movie posters, body jewelry. Open just a few weeks, the business also has a Web site up at

[www.subcultures.us](http://www.subcultures.us).

• Local optometrist **DR. TED MALONE**, whose practice was located at 642 Delaware Ave., has moved to new location at 902 Delaware Ave., across the street from Buddy's. Malone graduated from McComb High School, Southwest Mississippi Junior College and the Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, Tenn.

Malone is a retired military optometrist having served in Europe in the Army and Air Force. He is the son of Annie Day Fuller and the late Eddie Fuller.

**THIS FEATURE ON area businesses runs periodically and highlights newly opened businesses, ones that have undergone extensive renovations, expansions or have moved to a new location.**



# MAGNOLIA CLIPPING SERVICE

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STONE CO ENTERPRISE

WIGGINS, MS

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WEEKLY

07/21/2004



## Now Open



Cellular South, located at 1111 E. Frontage Rd, Wiggins, is now open for business. Grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremonies were held Friday, July 16. Pictured is Heather Stage, Store Manager; Linda Hughes, Marketing Specialist; Jon Davis, Corporate Account Manager; Miranda Dautat, Account Executive; Jessica Lee, Account Service Representative; Amy Gulotta, Account Service Representative; James Anderson, Account Service Representative; Brenda King; Richard Reynolds, Area Manager; Charlotte Moore, Peoples Bank Supervisor; Ferris O'Neal, Mayor City of Wiggins; Teresa Ladner, Wiggins City Clerk; Russell Hatten, SCEDP Director; Tommy Hall, City Alderman; Carol Hall, Faye Cooley, and Edith Baer. (Photo by Charlotte Wampler.)

# MAGNOLIA

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TYLERTOWN TIMES

TYLERTOWN, MS

Circulation = 2844

WEEKLY

07/22/2004



## Cellular South celebrates grand opening of redesigned retail store in McComb

Cellular South celebrated the grand opening of its newly remodeled McComb store recently.

"Cellular South offers a different kind of wireless service based on the simple premise that customers have rights, including the right to the best network available, and service and pricing that is fair and makes sense," said Scott Watson, Cellular South market manager. "We've taken that philosophy one step further with our new store design to create an improved wireless retail experience for our customers—including more wireless options, live phone demonstrations, a customer care center and a self-service payment kiosk."

In addition to the remodel of the McComb store, Cellular South recently invested \$38 million in a regional network expansion, which includes the addition of more than 100 new cell sites in its wireless markets and the extension of its CDMA 1X third generation digital wireless network to coastal Alabama and the Florida panhandle.

"We've added cell sites in strategic locations throughout our region—focusing on serving our customers, improving existing service and providing service where the national carriers won't," said Watson.

Visitors to the grand opening viewed live phone demonstrations, an array of wireless phones and accessories and other innovative services such as its QuickPay self-service payment kiosk. The grand-opening event featured a special one-day free Motorola phone offer, free refreshments and the opportunity to register to win door prizes.

As part of its commitment to improving the quality of life in communities it serves, Cellular South supports the Lifeline Assistance program designed to make phone services available to

qualifying applicants receiving income-based benefits. Cellular South provides this program in Mississippi so that wireless service is affordable for all Mississippians.

"Telephone service has become an essential part of American life, but there's still a small segment of our population that cannot afford this basic service," said Watson. "With Lifeline, Cellular South can provide this assistance so that wireless service is available to all who may need it."

For more information on the Lifeline Assistance Program or for eligibility information, contact Cellular South at any of their retail locations, by calling 1-877-CSOUTH1 or clicking on cellular-south.com.

McComb store hours are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. All Cellular South retail locations are closed on Sundays.

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DESOTO CO TRIBUNE

OLIVE BRANCH, MS  
Circulation = 7239

**WEEKLY**

07/22/2004

14-00000



Attending a ribbon-cutting for the opening of a new Cellular office are (left to right) Oive Branch Mayor Sam Rikard, Bruce Orpet, Erika Echols, Kristy Shive, Nick Wilkins, John Redmond, Neil McGeehee, Clark Cammins, Michele Marlow, Vicki Dupree and Bob Marr. Memphis RiverKings' Thing, Memphis Motorsports Park's Speedy and Rocky the Rockin' Redbird joined in the celebration. Cellular South has more than 75 retail locations in five states in the Southeast, covering a population of over 5.8 million. The new store is located at 8120 Camp Creek Boulevard off Goodman Road near Pigeon Roost Road. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Tribune photo by Mary Beth Dwy**

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CLIPPING SERVICE  
(801) 856-0811 / (205) 759-8610

DAILY JOURNAL  
TUPELO, MS  
Circulation = 34322

DAILY  
07/24/2004



## County to negotiate new cell phone contract

BY LEESHA FAULKNER  
*Daily Journal*

TUPELO — Lee County's supervisors are anticipating a rollover from Cingular Wireless to Cellular South for its 23 cell phones.

A decision to allow County Administrator Ronnie Bell to negotiate a contract with Cellular South emerged Friday during a discussion about the county's cell phone service.

All the contracts with Cingular, which holds the service, have expired with the exception of one, Bell told supervisors. Twelve of the county phones are on a pool plan and 11 are on individual plans. The total cost: \$1,179.77 a month.

When compared with Cellular South, the basic plans for the area are about the same in terms of service, Bell

said. "It comes down to dollars and cents."

Cellular South offered an "unlimited Lee County" plan that would allow calling from anywhere in Lee County to anywhere in Mississippi, Memphis and Jackson, Tenn., and the Florida panhandle. In addition, each mobile phone would have 300 minutes to use anywhere outside of Lee County in the local calling area. Cost per month: \$919.77.

Cellular South also gave supervisors an option of pooled 300 minutes with unlimited free incoming calls, no roaming and no long distance for a total of \$829.77.

But supervisors liked the Lee County plan. "I think the phones are to serve us within Lee County," said Phil Morgan of District 1.

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BELZONI BANNER

BELZONI, MS

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WEEKLY

10/01/2005 3



**CELLULAR SOUTH EXPANDS  
NETWORK WITH TOWER  
POWER II**

*Jackson, MS* - As part of continuing efforts to provide the best wireless service in the region, Cellular South has initiated a \$38 million network expansion of its third generation (3G) wireless network, which will result in more than 100 new cell sites in Mississippi. The company has dubbed the network expansion "Tower Power II".

This expansion will increase the total number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000, which will result in delivering more services and better coverage to its customers. The project is scheduled to be complete during the first half of 2004.

Cellular South's original Tower Power network expansion in 2000 was of a similar scope and added 100 new towers in one year. In 2003, the company continued to expand its network with the installation of Code-Division Multiple Access 1XRTT (CDMA 1X) technology. CDMA 1X is a third-generation (3G) digital wireless technology that significantly increases capacity for voice and data traffic, which allows the company to offer its popular unlimited Calling Plan that includes unlimited minutes for one flat rate.

"Cellular South is implementing Tower Power II for two reasons: to expand our coverage geographically and to improve the quality of our wireless service in existing areas," said Hu Meena, Cellular South president. "With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease number of

dropped and blocked calls, and enhance our position to offer more non-voice products like full email capability.

Additionally, the company announced that it has begun to overlay their existing second generation TDMA network in south Alabama and the Florida Panhandle with CDMA 1X technology. With an in-service date slated for the first quarter of next year, upon completion Cellular South's entire network will consist of state-of-the-art 3G technology.

"Cellular South is committed to providing dependable wireless technology utilizing the latest and greatest technology to residents who live and work in our region - the area we have defined as 'the Cellular South'," said Meena. "Our customers have shown their commitment to us with their loyalty and increased wireless usage throughout our 15-year history. In return, we will always strive to provide the best wireless service possible to meet their needs."

As wireless phones continue to grow in popularity, Cellular South's Unlimited Calling Plan has given its customers the freedom to use their phones more than ever before, without counting minutes. The plan features a flat rate of \$49.99 per month and includes the entire state of Mississippi and the Memphis Metro Area. Benefits include totally unlimited calling with no long distance or roaming charges within the local coverage area. Cellular South's calling plans provide nationwide service for customers who travel outside of their local coverage area, plus an option to add a bucket of "Just In Case Nationwide Minutes."

TOWERS

# Mississippi company, one of nation's largest, covering new ground

496  
By LYNNE W. JETER  
MBJ Contributing Writer

Jackson-based Cellular South, one of the nation's largest privately held wireless providers, is covering new ground.

The company, licensed to provide wireless service in five southeastern states including Mississippi, the Alabama Gulf Coast, the Florida Panhandle, Southwest Tennessee and West Arkansas, reaching more than five million people, is initiating a \$38-million "Tower Power II" network expansion of its third-generation (3G) wireless network, readying deployment of E911 to local 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), and implementing number portability.

The network expansion project, which will increase the total number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000 and improve service for its customers, is sched-

uled for completion by mid-2004. The company's original network expansion of 100 new towers began in 2000, and this project will add 100 more cell sites in Mississippi.

In 2002, Cellular South continued to expand its network with the installation of Code-Division Multiple Access 1XRTT (CDMA 1X) technology, a 3G digital wireless technology that significantly increases capacity for voice and data traffic.

"With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease the number of dropped and blocked calls and enhance our position to offer more non-voice products like full email capability," said Cellular South president Hu Meena.

The company has also begun to overlay its existing second-generation TDMA network in South Alabama and the Florida panhandle with CDMA 1X technology,

which should be in service early next year.

"Cellular South has the most extensive 3G network in the state," said Jana Long, Cellular South marketing and advertising director. "Currently, Cellular South and Sprint are the only two carriers in Mississippi with 3G networks in place. We upgraded our Mississippi network to 3G in early 2002, utilizing CDMA 1X technology. Our expansion to Southwest Tennessee in 1999 featured 3G technology from its startup. Toward the end of the first quarter in 2004, Cellular South's entire network will be 3G."

## E911 service

Ahead of schedule, Cellular South is now compatible for Phase I and II E911 deployment, in compliance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) guidelines.

"Per the FCC, the deployment of E911 requires the development of new technologies and upgrades to local 911 PSAPs, as well as coordination among public safety agencies, wireless carriers, technology vendors, equipment manufacturers and local wireline carriers," said Long.

The FCC established a four-year rollout schedule for Phase II, beginning Oct. 1, 2001 for completion by Dec. 31, 2005. To help identify and address factors causing delay in implementing Phase II, the FCC instituted a Phase II technical inquiry under the direction of Dale Hatfield.

The FCC's Phase II E911 rules include requiring wireless carriers, within six months of a valid request by a PSAP, to begin providing more precise location information to PSAPs, specifically, the latitude and longitude of the caller. This information must meet FCC accuracy standards.

## The power behind the tower

Cellular South is an operating unit of little-known holding company TELAPEX Inc., owned in part by Jackson brothers and attorneys Wade and Jimmy Creekmore. (In June 1987, WorldCom, then known as LDDS, acquired Southland Systems of Mississippi Inc., a long-distance reseller in Jackson owned by the Creekmores.)

A privately-held Mississippi corporation, Jackson-based TELAPEX has provided telecommunications services to portions of Mississippi and other states for more than 40 years through its subsidiaries that offer wireless, cable, local telephone exchange, broadband, Internet and long distance services.

TELAPEX was established April 13, 1959, with the purchase of a telephone system in the south Delta. The actual incorporation of TELAPEX, which operated as Potosi Company until Dec. 1, 1993, occurred on Jan. 27, 1987.

TELAPEX's subsidiaries include Telepak (dba Cellular South), Franklin Telephone Company, Delta Telephone Company, Branch Cable, Telapex Long Distance, and TPI Internet (dba Telepak Networks). — LWJ

Please see CELLULAR SOUTH, next page.

# Cellular South

Continued from previous page.

Generally, it must be accurate to within 50 to 300 meters, depending on the type of technology used, said Long.

"The FCC's Wireless 911 rules are being implemented in stages; they are not all immediately effective," she said. "The specific conditions and schedules of Phase I, Phase II and the revised schedules for nationwide carriers are located on the FCC Web site ([www.fcc.gov/911/enhanced](http://www.fcc.gov/911/enhanced)). The safety and well-being of our customers is a priority to us at Cellular South and we're working with each individual county government to implement both phases of E911 as quickly as possible."

Even though many companies are using GSM (global system for mobile communication), Cellular South is using GPS (global positioning system) by implementing a chip in the handset to communicate with

company equipment to identify the customer's location.

"We take the 911 location identification issue very seriously," said Long.

## Number portability

By November 24, Cellular South customers in Memphis and Mobile will be able to change wireless providers without having to change their cell phone numbers, as mandated by the FCC. Customers in smaller markets like Jackson will have the same flexibility by May 2004. The new regulation represents one of the biggest changes to hit the U.S. wireless industry, which has resisted cellular phone number portability because of customer-retention concerns.

"With the choices consumers will have soon, wireless companies will have to work even harder to hold onto their customers," said Meena.

The mandate allows wireless customers to keep their numbers when they change service providers within a local region. Consumers who move to a different area will require a new wireless number.

"Because we have the strongest tower network and one of the strongest rate plans available in our state, we believe Cellular South will benefit from wireless phone number portability," said Long.

## Economic outlook

Since first launching wireless service on the Mississippi Gulf Coast on Feb. 4, 1988, Cellular South has grown to employ more than 550 people and open more than 75 retail locations. In February 2003, Cellular South was awarded the Memphis Regional Chamber Quality Cup Team Award for pursuing principles and practices that lead to continuous improvements and customer satisfaction.

"The Institutions of Higher Learning shared with us earlier this year an estimate of our economic impact on

branching out," said Long. In an unusual move for a growing company, Cellular South, like the national restaurant chain Chick-fil-A, closes on Sundays, with the exception of a few mall kiosks in larger markets.

"Family values are important to Cellular South, which is one reason our retail stores are closed on Sundays to give our employees time at home with their families," said Meena.

Contact MBI contributing writer Lynne W. Jeter at [mbj@thewritingdesk.com](mailto:mbj@thewritingdesk.com).

toward mergers and acquisitions by national or international companies and brand name changes," he said. "Its stability and continuity of operations can, in part, be attributed to the owners' love for Mississippi and its investment in her infrastructure and people."

Cellular South has no plans to go public. And instead of broadening its geographical reach, the company will continue to improve its current service area, said Long.

"We want to do our very best in the areas that we are currently serving before

our home state," said Meena. "We learned the spin-off from Cellular South creates 648 additional jobs in Mississippi. The spin-off jobs add a \$12 million payroll to our \$18.6 million payroll, and an additional \$1.7 million to state revenues."

Even though the company has attracted potential buyers and sellers, Cellular South is not for sale, nor is it in an acquisition mode, said Meena.

"Though it has grown along with the industry, Cellular South has gone against the key trends of many wireless carriers

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**Cellular South launches  
\$38M network expansion**

Cellular South has initiated a \$38 million network expansion of its third generation (3G) wireless network, which will result in more than 100 new cell sites in Mississippi.

This expansion will increase the total number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000. The project is scheduled to be completed during the first half of 2004.



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**MS BUSINESS JOURNAL**

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**10/06/2003**



## **Cellular South begins 'Tower Power II'**

JACKSON — Cellular South has initiated a \$38-million network expansion of its third-generation (3G) wireless network. Dubbed "Tower Power II," the expansion will result in more than 100 new cell sites in Mississippi.

This expansion will increase the number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000. The projected completion of the project is the first half of 2004.

Cellular South's original "Tower Power" network expansion in 2000 was of similar scope, adding 100 new towers in one year. In 2002, the telecommunications company continued to expand its network with the installation of Code-Division Multiple Access 1XRTT (CDMA 1X) technology. CDMA 1X is 3G digital wireless technology that increases capacity for voice and data traffic.

"Cellular South is implementing 'Tower Power II' for two reasons — to expand our coverage geographically and to improve the quality of our wireless service in existing areas," said Hu Meena, president of Cellular South. "With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide

better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease the number of dropped or blocked calls and enhance our position to offer more non-voice products like full e-mail capability."

Additionally, the company has begun to overlay its existing second-generation TDMA network in South Alabama and the Florida Panhandle with CDMA 1X technology. With an in-service date slated for the first quarter of next year, upon completion Cellular South's entire network will consist of 3G technology.

RICHTON DISPATCH

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10/09/2003



## Cellular South expands network with Tower Power II

Jackson, MS, September 24, 2003—As part of continuing efforts to provide the best wireless service in the region, Cellular South has initiated a \$38 million network expansion of its third generation (3G) wireless network, which will result in more than 100 new cell sites in Mississippi. The company has dubbed the network expansion "Tower Power II."

This expansion will increase the total number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000, which will result in delivering more services and better coverage to its customers. The project is scheduled to be complete during the first half of 2004.

Cellular South's original Tower Power network expansion in 2000 was of a similar scope and added 100 new towers in one year. In 2002, the company continued to expand its network with the installation of Code-Division Multiple Access - ISRTT (CDMA 1X) technology. CDMA 1X is a third-generation (3G) digital wireless technology that significantly increases capacity for voice and data traffic, which allows the company to offer its popular Unlimited Calling Plan that includes minutes for one flat rate.

"Cellular South is implementing Tower Power II for two reasons: to expand our coverage geographically and to improve the quality of our

wireless service in existing areas," said Flu Meena, Cellular South President. "With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease number of dropped and blocked calls and enhance our position to offer more non-voice products like full email capability."

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Calling Plan has given its customers the freedom to use their phones more than ever before, without calling minutes. The plan features a flat rate of \$49.99 per month and includes the entire state of Mississippi and the Memphis Metro area. Benefits include totally unlimited calling with no long distance or roaming charges within the local coverage area. Cellular South's calling plans provide nationwide service for customers who travel outside of their local coverage area, plus an option to add a bucket of "Just in Case Nationwide Minutes."

# Cingular puts \$140 million in cell towers

BY MICHAEL SHEFFIELD

CingularWireless will invest almost \$140 million in its Memphis and West Tennessee network between now and next year.

Cingular has added 35 cellular towers in Memphis this year and is poised to add another 30 next year. The company now has a total of 218 and will have almost 250 by the time the expansion is complete.

Keith Traster, Cingular's director of sales for West Tennessee, says the company's investment will ensure the quality of its Memphis network.

"We've already invested \$70 million this year in expansion and we plan on doing at least that next year because we take great pride in our network and in being the best," he says. "Customers expect our network to be as good as it has and we have to keep up with that."

There is no start and finish date for the expansion, but Traster says the company will use the same method it has used this year — when the real estate and zoning is available, the work will happen.

"It will be next year sometime, we just don't have the dates set in stone," he says.

Calie Shackelford, regional public relations manager for Cingular, says the expansion is a normal part of doing business and maintaining the company's status as "the top wireless provider in Memphis."

Shackelford says the recent Wireless Local



Cingular Wireless  
Nation's No. 2 wireless  
carrier behind Verizon  
Wireless

Local address: 7000

Goodlett Farms

Parkway Suite 500

Phone: 381-7988

West Tennessee

director of sales:

Keith Traster

Web site:

[www.cingular.com](http://www.cingular.com)

See CINGULAR, Page 55

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MEMPHIS BUS JOL

MEMPHIS, TN

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10/10/2003



### CINGULAR: Wireless firms gear up for better service with huge investments in networks

#### FROM PAGE ONE

Number Portability (WLNP) regulations passed by the FCC, scheduled to take effect Nov. 24, will not impact funds allocated for the network expansion. Those regulations, which allow wireless customers to carry their phone numbers with them if they switch carriers, have been the source of controversy, but have been accepted as inevitable (*Memphis Business Journal*, Sept. 19-25).

Major wireless carriers have said the regulations will require administrative

adjustments that will cost the industry billions of dollars.

"The network expansion was always in our plan and it was in the plan before WLNP was an issue," Shackelford says. "I don't think that's a network issue and the money comes from a different place than the money for this."

Not to be outdone on the expansion front, Cellular South, which has been in the Memphis market since November 2001, is also working on a \$38 million expansion of its network, which will result in more than 100 new cell sites across southwest Tennessee and Mississippi. The company has dubbed the network expansion "Tower Power II." Cellular South currently has nearly 1,000 towers in this region, which includes southwest Tennessee, Mississippi, West

Arkansas, the Alabama Gulf Coast and the Florida Panhandle.

Hu Meena, president of Cellular South, says the expansion will enlarge the company's geographic coverage and improve wireless service in existing areas.

"With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease the number of dropped and blocked calls and enhance our position to offer more non-voice products like full e-mail capability," he says.

Shackelford says the Memphis market is one of the biggest wireless markets in the country. She says three-fourths of area households subscribe to wireless

service and many of the remaining households are considering subscriptions in the next year.

"Call volumes are increasing in the Memphis area and subscribers are joining up every month, so we have to stay ahead of the game," she says. "We can't wait until the network can't handle it anymore. We have to anticipate the need and stay on top of it."

Traster says Cingular invests more money in their cellular towers to conceal them from view. There are some sites in Germantown that look like flagpoles, trees or signs that are actually cell towers.

"It costs a little more, but we want them to blend in," he says.

CONTACT staff writer Michael Sheffield at 259-1722 or [mshfield@bizjournals.com](mailto:mshfield@bizjournals.com)

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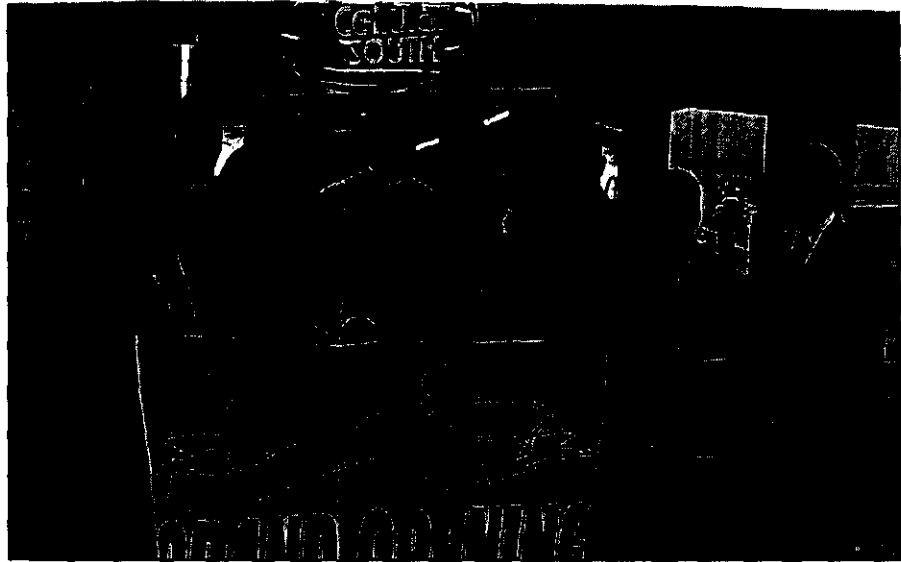
SOUTH REPORTER

HOLLY SPRINGS, MS

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WEEKLY

11/13/2003



## Cutting the ribbon

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Wednesday, Nov. 5, for Cellular South of Holly Springs, which is located at 186 West College Street inside Carlisle's Big Star. Pictured at the ceremony, which was coordinated by the Holly Springs Chamber of Commerce, are (from left) Mary Clay Brooks, Carol Person, Fred Carlisle, Joanne Huff, Lavora Blake, Mayor Andre DeBerry, Bruce Orpet, Tiffany L. Thomas, G. Clark Cummins, Sharon White and John Redmond. Cellular South is one of the nation's largest privately held wireless phone companies.

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**11/13/2003**



## Business Notes

496

Plastic and Hand Surgery Associates, PLLC, and the Face and Body Center of Plastic and Hand Surgery Associates have moved to 2550 Flowood Dr. Located on the first two floors of Riverchase Medical Suites, the new facility will offer a variety of plastic and reconstructive surgery services and skin-care services in one location. "We had simply outgrown our office suites in St. Dominic West Medical Tower," said Stephen F. Davidson, M.D., one of 10 surgeons in Plastic and Hand Surgery Associates. "Our move to Riverchase Medical

Suites will fulfill our dream of having our own ambulatory surgery center that will include same-day/outpatient surgery with overnight-stay facilities," he added.

Cellular South has initiated a \$38 million network expansion of its third generation (3G) wireless network, which will result in more than 100 new cell sites in Mississippi. The company has dubbed the network expansion "Tower Power II." This expansion will increase the local number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000, which will result in delivering more services and better coverage to its customers. The project is scheduled to be complete during the first half of 2004.

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# Cellular South will expand network with 13 more sites

By Mark Watson

watson@gomemphis.com

496

Jackson, Miss.-based Cellular South has launched a \$38 million expansion to its digital wireless network, stepping up its service by adding 13 more cell sites.

The company expects the upgrade to the network, which now has 202 cell sites, to be completed by mid-2004.

Cellular South is adding towers to expand geographic coverage and improve service.

"With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease the number of dropped and blocked calls and enhance our position to offer more nonvoice products, like full E-mail capability," said Hu Meena, company president.

Cellular South, one of the nation's largest privately held wireless providers, provides wireless services to five Southern states: Mississippi, the Alabama Gulf Coast, the Florida Panhandle, Southwest

Tennessee and West Arkansas.

The highly competitive wireless market has companies upgrading and expanding their networks in the Mid-South.

Cingular, which has about 218 cell sites in the area, plans to add 30 in 2004 — investing more than \$70 million in the West Tennessee region, said Keith Traster, the company's Memphis general manager.

Nextel has 86 sites in the metro area, said Norma Tharp, Nextel's Atlanta-based spokesman.

Verizon Wireless has 72 cell sites in metro Memphis and about 175 in West Tennessee, said Dewanna Lofton, of Verizon's local public relations firm, McNeely Pigott & Fox.

Sprint PCS would not reveal its number of sites in the metro area, but the company is spending more than \$6 million to expand its Memphis network.

Cellular South and Cingular each claim the Memphis area's best network quality.

The contrast is pretty stark.

While Cellular South provides services to five states, Cingular Wireless is the brain-

child of BellSouth and SBC, two Baby Bells that serve much of the United States.

Cingular serves more than 22 million people, about four times the total population of areas served by Cellular South.

Cingular serves customers in 43 of the nation's 50 largest metro areas. Memphis is the sole metro that Cellular serves among the top 50.

Cellular South spokesman Jana Long cited a study by Southern Research Group, of Jackson, Miss., that showed Cellular South edged out Cingular in Memphis for network satisfaction.

Cellular South won a Memphis Regional Chamber Quality Cup for enhancement of its network, she said.

An in-house survey showed 97 percent of Memphis customers are satisfied with Cellular South service, she said.

Cellular South's dropped-call rate in Memphis is 0.6 percent, compared with an industry average of about 5 percent, she said.

— Mark Watson: 529-5874

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### CELLULAR SOUTH EXPANDS NETWORK WITH TOWER

#### 496 POWER II

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**Cellular South  
to build tower** 496

Cellular South has been given a conditional use permit for construction and operation of a 250-foot self-supporting telecommunications tower at 145 Lomax. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen gave the approval recently after having first turned down the request.

Cellular South representatives say the tower, its second in the Batesville area, is needed to meet demand.

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CLARION LEDGER

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## Cellular South plans to add 100 towers

The Clarion Ledger

Jackson-based Cellular South will invest \$38 million to add 100 towers and upgrade their coverage.

The upgrade, currently ongoing, is expected to be complete within the first half of 2004, said Jana Long, director of advertising and marketing.

Cellular South is constantly improving technology, though not always on such a grand scale, Long said. The improvements will bring to more than 1,000 the number of towers Cellular South has in its region.

"We began building towers 15 years ago and basically haven't stopped," she said.

The upgrades will expand the coverage area and help with increased call volume.

Cellular South in 2000 added 100 new towers. In 2002, the company added digital wireless technology that increased the capacity for voice and data traffic.

Cellular South is one of the nation's largest privately held wireless providers and is licensed to provide wireless service in five southeastern states including Mississippi, the Alabama Gulf Coast, the Florida Panhandle, Southwest Tennessee and West Arkansas.

"With these additional cell sites, our network will efficiently accommodate increased call volume, provide better coverage where there may have been some gaps, decrease number of dropped and blocked calls and enhance our position to offer more non-voice products like full email capability," Cellular South president Hu Meena, said in a statement.

# Link



MISSISSIPPI ECONOMIC COUNCIL  
THE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

## Jackson-based Cellular South expanding network

Cellular South has initiated a \$38 million network expansion of its third generation (3G) wireless network, resulting in more than 100 new cell sites in Mississippi, and increasing the total number of towers in Cellular South's region to more than 1,000. The project is scheduled to be complete during the first half of 2004.

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Cellular South, headquartered in Jackson, is one of the nation's largest privately held wireless providers and licensed to provide wireless service in five southeastern states including Mississippi, the Alabama Gulf Coast, the Florida Panhandle, Southwest Tennessee and West Arkansas, totaling a population of more than five million. For more information, contact Cellular South at 1-877-CSOUTH1 or visit <http://www.cellularsouth.com/>

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08/22/2003



## Firm asks city to reconsider tower site plan

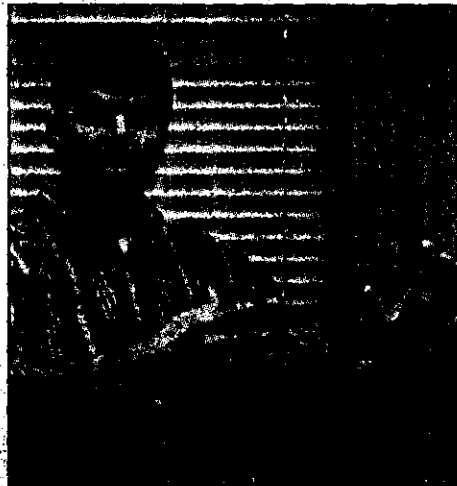
BY KATE B.  
DICKSON

4/96 EDITOR

The proliferation of cell phones in the area has Cellular South asking city officials, who agreed, to reconsider a decision denying placement of a new tower.

Though no date was set for a vote, Mayor Bobby Baker said a decision will be made soon pending legal research by Assistant City Attorney Colmon Mitchell.

The conditional use permit application was rejected in June when some members of the board were opposed on the grounds of aesthetics.



The Panolian photo by Kate B. Dickson

Cellular South spokesman Todd Jenkins said the proliferation of cell phone customers make a second tower necessary in order to provide good service in Batesville.

**FIRM**

Continued on Page A7

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PANOLIAN  
BATESVILLE, MS  
Circulation = 4846

WEEKLY  
08/22/2003



**FIRM**

Continued from Page A1

Todd Jenkins, site acquisition manager for Cellular South, told board members Tuesday the company still wants to build the 250-foot tower at 145 Lomax.

He noted that during a June 3 public hearing on the issue "we had no opposition."

Accompanying him and other Cellular South officials at the meeting was local attorney Ted Smith.

Jenkins said the site near a cotton gin is "zoned industrial." He said only a few homes are nearby.

He said technological needs as well as more and more usage makes a second tower necessary.

As it is, Jenkins said, the current capacity with just one tower in use limits reception coverage, especially "in build-

ing" coverage in Batesville.

"The salespeople have complaints every day," he said. "That one tower can't handle Batesville by itself."

"We're doing this to promote business, Batesville is trying to promote business, that's what we're trying to do," Jenkins said.

Alderman Hudson Still said, "I have no opposition to any cellular company ... and I know there are only a few houses there but I wouldn't want a cellular tower within 200 feet ..."

Alderman Bobbie Pounders had a different viewpoint.

"I've looked at the site from all [surrounding] areas," she said. "I can't really see a better place."



# Cellular South 496 opens in Collins

Cellular South held a grand opening celebration at its new Collins kiosk on Thursday, August 7. The kiosk is located on Highway 49, inside the Grocery Depot in Collins.

"Cellular South has been working for more than 15 years to provide the best coverage and custom service in the region," said Shane Tuttle, Cellular South area manager. "We're dedicated to providing our customers the best wireless plans and service available, and that service starts with a convenient, pleasant and efficient shopping experi-

ence."

Tuttle added, "We're excited about opening our new location in Collins and look forward to serving new and existing customers in the Collins area."

The Collins kiosk is one of more than 75 Cellular South retail locations in Mississippi, Southwest Tennessee, South Alabama and the Florida Panhandle.

"Our goal is to provide the best service in the community where we live and work. As a regional wireless carrier, we're not waiting on national com-

panies to come into Collins and invest in the latest technology, we're doing it now," said Stephanie Draughn, market manager. "The Cellular South is our home, and our investments in the area demonstrate our strong commitment to give customers the best of the opportunities that wireless technology offers for the future."

As part of the Jackson-based company's effort to serve all Mississippians throughout its home state, Cellular South offers the Lifeline Assistance program, a Federal program designed to make phone

services available to qualified persons who receive income-based benefits. Lifeline Assistance is currently available to any qualifying subscriber participating in one of the following programs in Mississippi: Medicaid, food stamps, supplemental security income, federal public housing assistance, or low-income home energy assistance program.

Collins store hours are Thursday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. All Cellular South retail locations are closed on Sundays.

# 496 Weather slows down Natchez Trace work; project still on schedule

By CHARLOTTE DIXON  
Sun Staff Intern

**GROUNDWORK** **BEGAN** recently on the new retail center, Main Street Crossing, located in Madison. It will be one of the newest and upscale developments in the city.

Plans for the development were recently approved by city of Madison planning and zoning committee and the Madison board of aldermen.

The property's developer, Bridgeforth Rutledge said he has signed leases with Cellular South, Moe's Southwest Grill, and Kolb's Cleaners as a few of the anticipated businesses.

"I felt like the demand for upper scale space in Madison was there, and that the type of development I wanted to build was consistent with other developments in Madison."

There have been strong demands from other prospective businesses, but Rutledge said he hasn't made any decisions.

Main Street Crossing, approximately 11,200 square feet in size, should be built by year's end, and will cost somewhere around \$2 million, said Rutledge. It will be located on the corner of Main Street and Garden Park Boulevard.

According to Joseph Orr, project architect, the new development will be a first class retail building with curb appeal.

"We think it's harmonious with the architectural standards that are established for the city of Madison," said Orr.

The building will have warm brick colors and canvas awnings which will give the outer appearance some depth for shade and shadow. Orr also said there will be ornamentation which will render some level of sophistication that "you really do not see on some other buildings in Madison." A grand archway will be at the entrance.

Currently the groundwork and (See **CENTER**, Page 10A)

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NORTHSIDE SUN

JACKSON, MS

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07/31/2003



Main Street Crossing

## Center

(Continued from Page One) C  
excavation is being done for the initial stages of the site.

**RUTLEDGE SAID HE** believes

that traffic may flow easier since there will be frontage on three different roads: Main Street, Grand Park Boulevard and another street to be built that has yet to be named.

"I believe the visibility as well the ingress and egress will be better than it will be in a lot of retail developments."



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NEWS-COMMERCIAL

COLLINS, MS

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07/30/2003



## Cellular South to hold ribbon cutting

Cellular South invites the public to the official opening of its new Collins location Thursday, August 7, at 10:30 a.m.

The new Collins store is located in the Covington Plaza on Highway 49 south.

## MAGNOLIA

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MADISON CO HERALD

CANTON, MS

Circulation = 11558

WEEKLY

06/24/2003



# More new businesses head to Madison

496 By Lucy Weber

lweber@mchenald.com

**MADISON** | New businesses are coming to town.

Work will start on a state headquarters building, a shopping center, including a new restaurant, and a bank in the next few months, developers say.

The Mississippi Hospital Association plans to relocate its headquarters off I-220 in Jackson to 14 acres in the Village of Woodgreen off Mississippi 463.

"We've owned the property since 1985," said Eddie Foster, the chief financial officer for the trade association that represents 100 hospitals in the state. "We wanted to build in the

mid-90s," but the move didn't work out then, he said.

The building will be located on the west side of I-55, adjacent to the Summertree neighborhood.

"Summertree residents like it," Foster said.

The headquarters will be built on a connector road from Woodgreen Drive to Woodgreen Place that Mayor Mary Hawkins Butler said the city has agreed to construct. The company is donating the land for the road, Foster said.

"The Mississippi Department of Transportation will pay for it," Butler said. "We're still trying to establish a price."

The city is negotiating with the

state department. "There are problems there we need to get ironed out or you won't have access from Summertree," Butler said at a recent meeting of the Board of Aldermen when officials approved the plans for all the new buildings.

"We can start construction by Sept. 15. We hope to get the road issue worked out before then," Foster said.

Association members want to get into their new headquarters by late 2004, Foster said. The building will have administrative offices and an education center for its members, he said.

Main Street Crossing is a new strip retail center that developer

Bridgforth Rutledge plans to start work on shortly. The shopping center is across Mississippi 463 from another of Rutledge's projects, a Back Yard Burgers restaurant.

Moe's Southwest Grill, Cellular South and Kolk's Cleaners plan to move into the shopping center, Rutledge said. "We have three other tenants looking at other parts of it," he said.

Architect Joseph Orr said work on the site will start in about three weeks. Construction should take "six months at the longest," Orr said.

Rutledge said the hamburger restaurant he's building at the corner of Mississippi 463 and Grandview Boulevard, the street leading into the

new Wal-Mart Super Center, should open in September. "It's coming along well," he said.

"You're going to be competing with yourself," Butler told Rutledge about the Moe's restaurant going in across the street.

"You can only eat so many hamburgers," Rutledge joked.

The newest bank in town will be Bankfirst Financial Services at 8 Key Office Park.

The bank, with headquarters in Macon, is new to the Madison area, said Nolan Williamson, the engineer for the project.

"We're ready to start immediately," Williamson said. "We'll get in it this year."

PANOLIAN

BATESVILLE, MS

Circulation = 4846

WEEKLY

06/06/2003



# Batesville city board votes no on cell tower

## *Still: 'structure would not be aesthetically pleasing.'*

**BY JASON C. MATTOX**

SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The City of Batesville does not want additional cellular towers located in town, aldermen said during a recent meeting.

Cellular South representatives Bill Yost and Dave Smith approached Batesville Mayor Bobby Baker and the Board of Aldermen with a request to construct a new tower that would service the west side of the city.

"The tower would need to be 250 feet tall to properly service the area," Yost said. "We looked at continuing service with just the one existing tower, but it would not

solve the problems of our customers."

"We have found a site that we feel can solve the dropped call problems we have been having," he said referring to the location near Frame Picture Enterprises on Highway 6.

Yost said the location was ideal because it was not near any residential dwellings.

"The new tower would also assist other cellular customers receive better service in the area as well," he said.

One concern the board expressed was the Mississippi Department of Transportation's plans for expand-

ing Highway 6 to four lanes.

"The plans for the tower indicate it would be set far enough off of the highway that it would not impact future expansion in any way," Yost said.

Ward Three Alderman James Yelton said he used Cellular South for phone service and has had no problems.

"I have never missed a call," he said. "And I can't see putting a tower in the middle of town."

Ward Four Alderman Bobbie Jean Pounders asked the representatives if it would be possible to locate the tower further out of town.

"We are getting dropped call complaints almost everyday in our store here," Smith said. "The local employees are being beat up by this daily and the further we go out of town, the less beneficial it will be."

Alderman at Large Hudson Still said he didn't think a new tower is the proper answer to the problem.

"I realize we are all dependent on cell phones, but this is not aesthetically pleasing or in the best interest of the city," Still said. "If we do this once, it will be one of those things that will continue popping up left and right."

The aldermen denied the request with a unanimous vote.

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TYLERTOWN TIMES

TYLERTOWN, MS

Circulation = 2844

WEEKLY

06/05/2003



## 496 Cellular South opens new Tylertown store

Cellular South plans a grand ~~celebration at its~~ new Tylertown store Friday. An official ribbon cutting ceremony is set for 1 p.m. The store is located at 809 Beulah Avenue, inside the Sunflower in Tylertown.

"Cellular South has been working for more than 15 years to provide the best coverage and customer service in the region," said Shane Tuttle, Cellular South area manager. "We're dedicated to providing our customers the best wireless plans and service available, and that service starts with a convenient, pleasant and efficient shopping experience."

The Tylertown store is one

of more than 75 Cellular South retail locations in Mississippi, Southwest Tennessee, South Alabama and the Florida Panhandle.

Visitors to the Grand Opening will enjoy free refreshments, door prizes, the opportunity to sign up for one of Cellular South's competitive unlimited calling plans and register to win a Hummer H2.

"Our goal is to provide the best service in the community where we live and work. As a regional wireless carrier, we're not waiting on national companies to come into Tylertown and invest in the latest technology, we're doing it now," said Tuttle. "The

Cellular South is our home, and our investments in the area demonstrate our strong commitment to give customers the best of the opportunities that wireless technology offers for the future."

Store hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. All Cellular South retail locations are closed on Sundays.

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TIMES

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05/22/2003



## Columbia Wal-Mart opens doors

COLUMBIA - A Wal-Mart Supercenter opened in Columbia on Wednesday, May 14, and thousands of Marion County residents have already converged on the store.

Super Wal-Mart should not be too much of a shock for Columbia, which has a population of 6,800, because the city was already home to a regular Wal-Mart.

Super Wal-Mart come with different amenities than a regular Wal-Mart, such as a grocery store that will compete with Columbia's two other grocers Piggly Wiggly and Win-Dixie.

The Super Wal-Mart also features a Tire and Lube Express, vision center, snack bar, deli, pharmacy, one hour photo processing lab, portrait studio, a hair salon and Cellular South. The Supercenter encompasses more than 188,000 square feet of retail space and employs 500 associates.

While Super Wal-Marts are often thought of as capitalistic empires that monopolize small city markets, Wal-Mart is also known for the positive things it does for small communities through its Good Works pro-

SEE WAL-MART, PAGE 5SMJ

eight grandchildren

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**HATTIESBURG, MS**  
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**05/22/2003**



# Wal-Mart

**FROM PAGE 1SMJ**

gram. During the grand opening ceremony of the Columbia store more than \$23,000 was contributed to area non-profit organizations through the Good Works program. Last year, Wal-Mart contributed \$3.5 million to Mississippi organizations.

The grand opening also included appearances by Mayor Harold Bryant, Police Chief Jimmy Stringer, Sheriff Rip Stringer, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, and Teacher of the Year Wynne Mailey from Columbia Primary School.

In Mississippi there are 41 Wal-Mart Supercenters, 21 Wal-Mart discount stores, one Neighborhood Market and five Sam's Clubs, employing more than 24,300 associates.

The first Wal-Mart in Mississippi opened in 1982 and since then has injected millions of dollars into Mississippi's economy.

In the United States Wal-Mart operates more than 2,870 discount stores, Supercenters and Neighborhood Markets, and more than 520 Sam Clubs, all of which result in annual sales of \$244.5 billion.

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SEE WAL-MART, PAGE 5SMJ

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PETAL NEWS

PETAL, MS

Circulation = 2380

WEEKLY

05/22/2003



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FROM PAGE 1SMJ

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BAY PRESS

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04/16/2003



### Cellular South opens location inside Interstate Chevron in D'Iberville 496

Cellular South, a regional wireless provider headquartered in Jackson, has opened a new retail location inside the Interstate Chevron located at 3716 Sargent Blvd. in D'Iberville.

The Interstate Chevron kiosk location is one of 85 Cellular South retail locations the company operates to make shopping for wireless products and services more convenient for its customers. In addition, the company provides a state-of-the-art Internet Store at cellular-south.com, a toll-free Tel# Services Center at (877) CSOUTH11 and a network of more than 100 authorized retailers in the southeast.



METEOR  
CRYSTAL SPRINGS, MS  
Circulation = 3059

WEEKLY  
04/09/2003



## ➔ Tower FROM PAGE 1

in the matter. The city will contract with an individual to remove the structure and clean up with expenses added to taxes on the property as permitted by state law.

The city received a \$22,000 refund on overpayment to the state of municipal court and police assessments.

Continuing efforts are being made to upgrade the police vehicle fleet including a challenge to the attorney general that "home rule" should allow the city to accept a car with advertising painted on it to be used by the police.

The board was reminded that anyone planning to seek work on their homes from the Coast Community Church mission should contact the mayor for details.

The city is still seeking emergency assistance for repair of the Harmony

Road water well but because of budget cutbacks, the chances of receiving this aid seems remote.

Officials were invited to view the demonstration of a new type of aerator at the wastewater treatment plant.

The mayor reported that the environmental education project at Chautauqua Park Tuesday was successful.

Expenses for two city employees to attend training sessions were authorized.

The police department was authorized for a 50-50 grant under the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant program.

A surplus lawn mower was authorized sold to Lewis Posey.

Officials recessed until April 15 at 7 p.m.

## New site sought for Cellular South tower

By Henry Carney

The site for construction of a tower for Cellular South communications has been rejected because of its location in the historical district just west of the police station according to Mayor Walter Rielley at the regular meeting of city officials Tuesday.

According to the mayor an alternate site is being sought.

### Sol Street Center

On a 3-1 vote with Alderman Hicks voting nay officials agreed to make a progress payment to Innovative Interiors for \$26,487 on the Sol Street Community Center renovation program. At issue was some fascia board which was not the same as that specified but the city's architect and building inspector gave the board their opinions that the material used was equal or superior to material specified. Officials were assured that there was enough retainage in the contract to cover any adjustments that might be required.

### Other Matters

Claims totaling \$212,100 were approved including the progress payment to Innovative and Tinsley for utility work on the railroad bridges north and south of Crystal Springs.

Two residents of Kendall Lane complained that they were not notified of the shut off of the water supply necessitated by a break in a line. One beauty salon owner complained that loss of water caused her hair to be damaged because a permanent in progress could not be washed out. Both also complained that city employees were not as courteous as they should have been. Mayor Rielley apologized and asked that anyone receiving less than considerate service by a city employee submit a report of such incident in writing so he can deal with it.

Officials authorized the cleanup of Gilmore family property that had been previously adjudicated because no progress has been made by the family

TOWER PAGE 4

# MAGNOLIA

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LEE CO COURIER

TUPELO, MS

Circulation = 4406

WEEKLY

03/20/2003



## City switches cell phone providers

By William Moore  
Staff Writer

496

Switching cell phone providers will save the city of Tupelo about \$2,000 each month.

In a special called meeting, the Tupelo City Council chose Cellular South to provide a total of 78 phones for just more than \$2,300 per month.

"We had three different companies make proposals," said councilman Perry Smith. "We'll switch over to the new provider Monday (March 17).

"It's cheaper, about half the cost. Plus they'll bill each department separately."

In early February, the city council pulled in all but essential phones and ended its contract with AT&T Wireless. At the time, the city had more than 100 cell phones and a billing nightmare.

In order to comply with federal bookkeeping requirements, each city department must be kept separate. Instead, the

monthly bill lumped all the cell phones into one pile. It took accounting days sometimes to figure it out.

Because of the confusion, the city routinely paid bills, only to later discover they overpaid by as much as \$1,000 and were given credits.

Cellular South has agreed to separate the phones by city departments.

"They will offer duplicate billing, sending one to the business office and one to each department," said Mayor Larry Otis. "That will save time, allowing the department head to sign off on the bill and quickly get back with the business office."

The new contract calls for phones on several different plans. Only department heads and top officials will receive phones with unlimited minute plans.

Otis said Cellular South will also allow the city the luxury of changing its plan on the fly.

"If someone is going to be

going out of town on business," said Otis. "We can switch plans for that phone for a day or two to have nationwide long distance and avoid roaming fees.

"Then when they come back, we can revert, all with a phone call."

While the new cellular contract calls for 78 phones, not all of the phones are in the general city fund.

Otis said only 51 phones will be used by regular city departments, including the police, fire and public works. The Tupelo Convention and Visitor's Bureau will have another six phones while 21 more will be used by the North Mississippi Narcotics Unit.

TVCB and NMNU are separate entities with their own funding sources and will pay their own bills, Otis noted. Because both groups have city ties, they joined the phone plan to enjoy group discount rates. Both were also included in the previous plan.



## Store

Continued from page 1A

plans," Tuttle said. "We're not going to wait for the national companies to come in. We're going to put in the technology now."

The retail store will be located off Williamsville Drive near the Canal Place Shopping Center.

"We've seen tremendous growth in the area which has motivated us into making the move into the area," Tuttle said.

Construction of the store is expected to be completed between July and September.

CellularSouth's coverage extends through Southwest Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama and the Florida panhandle covering a population of more than 5 million, with the nearest retail store being in Meridian.

The 500-employee company launched wireless service first on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 1988.

Since 1999, the company has invested more than \$60 million in infrastructure improvements in Mississippi.

A coverage enhancement that ties Philadelphia into a loop with Meridian is expected to improve cellular coverage for the Pearl River Resort area among other places in Neshoba County, Tuttle said, all pending FCC approval.

An additional tower is also under consideration for a site west of the city on Mississippi 16 West. The company currently has an antenna connected to a TVA tower near a substation off Mayo Street.

"With the new tower in place, we'll have good coverage in the city," Gordy said.

# Cellular provider opening retail store

By CHRIS ALLEN BAKER  
Neshoba Democrat Reporter

Another cellular communications provider is planning a retail store in Philadelphia along with new towers.

Jackson-based CellularSouth expects to have a Philadelphia store open by September, officials said.

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen granted a height variance two weeks ago for a 210-foot cellular tower across from U.S. Motors between an electrical substation and a livestock barn.

CellularSouth has had its eye on establishing a retail presence in Philadelphia for two years, said Shane Tuttle, area manager, as well as priorities for improving cellular technology.

"Philadelphia is an area that we have wanted to grow into for quite awhile and the opportunity has presented itself for us to move forward on those

See STORE, page 14A

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HATTIESBURG, MS

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### Tupelo

## Officials: Phone deal to save money

Tupelo officials say a new cell phone contract will save the city more than \$2,000 a month.

The agreement with Cellular South apparently ends a three-month dispute over who should have cell phones, a controversy that led to a City Council vote last month that briefly denied cell phones to the mayor and the city's chief operations officer.

*From The Associated Press*

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DAILY CORINTHIAN

CORINTH, MS

Circulation = 8714

DAILY

03/15/2003



## Cell phone deal will save funds

Associated Press

494  
TUPELO - Tupelo officials say a new cell phone contract will save the city more than \$2,000 a month.

The agreement with Cellular South apparently ends a ~~three-month~~ dispute over who should have cell phones, a controversy that led to a City Council vote last month that briefly denied cell phones to the mayor and the city's chief operations officer.

Councilman Perry Smith said the new contract approved Wednesday would provide ample phones for city employees who need them, including 57 phones

for the administration and 21 for the North Mississippi Narcotics Unit.

Expenses of the narcotics unit aren't part of the city's general budget, but as the regional group's lead agency the city handles its billings.

The total bill for the 78 phones would be \$2,364 a month, officials said.

The last billing from the city's old cell service carrier was more than \$4,500, council members said recently.

The switch will take place on Monday.

The new service will establish departmental pools with varying use limits on individual phones based on past experience.

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STARKVILLE DAILY NEWS

STARKVILLE, MS

Circulation = 6036

DAILY

03/15/2003



## Officials: Phone deal to save \$2,000

496  
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DAILY JOURNAL

TUPELO, MS

Circulation = 34322

DAILY

03/13/2003



## Tupelo OKs new cell phone pact

**■ Council members who had phones under old contract will not be among those assigned new phones.**

BY PHILIP MOULDEN

Daily Journal

Tupelo's City Council agreed Wednesday to a cell phone contract with Cellular South that officials said would save the city more than \$2,000 a month.

The agreement apparently ends a three-month dispute over who should have cell phones, a controversy that led to a council vote last month that briefly denied cell phones to the mayor and the city's chief operations officer.

Ward 6 Councilman Perry Smith said the new contract would provide ample phones for city employees who need

them, including 57 phones for the administration and 21 for the North Mississippi Narcotics Unit.

Narcotics unit expenses aren't part of the city's general budget, but as the regional group's lead agency, the city handles its billings.

The total bill for the 78 phones would be \$2,364 a month, officials said. The last billing from the city's old cell service carrier, AT&T Wireless, was more than \$4,500, council members said recently.

The switch from AT&T to Cellular South will take place Monday. The new service will establish departmental pools with varying use limits on individual phones based on past experience, officials said.

Smith noted the new company will provide dual billings, one to each department involved and the other

to the city finance office. Previously, the city got one massive bill covering all phones, forcing finance department officials to spend days delegating costs to actual users and departments.

"This certainly will be a good savings to the city," at-large Councilman Bill Nesmith said.

"This came out clearly as the most economical plan we could come up with," Mayor Larry Otis said. He added the city and Cellular South would review use periodically and the city could alter the plan at any time to take advantage of cheaper options where applicable.

City Council members, all but one of whom had city phones for some period under the old contract, will not be among those assigned new phones.

# Cellular South celebrates hallmark anniversary

496  
**JACKSON** — Jackson-based Cellular South, a wireless company serving five southeastern states, recently celebrated a landmark anniversary — 15 years of business in an industry that itself is only two decades old. In that time, Cellular South has become the largest privately held wireless company in the U.S.

Less than five years after the FCC began awarding the initial licenses in the wireless industry, Cellular South was positioned to implement the new technology under local management in its home state. The company launched wireless service in its first market, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, on February 4, 1988, with Mississippi football legend Archie Manning making the inaugural call to then U.S. Representative Trent Lott in Washington.

Cellular South quickly expanded its wireless networks from beyond the Gulf Coast to cover most of South Mississippi. Today, the wireless provider offers service to all of Mississippi, Memphis and parts of West Tennessee, the Mobile area and the Florida Panhandle.

"The growth and vitality of Cellular South can be attributed completely to our employees and their dedication to customer service," said Hu Meena, company president. "We still operate under the vision we had when we started 15 years ago, to provide the best customer service, not just in comparison to other wireless companies, but the best service of any retail business."

Still privately held and headquartered in Jackson, Cellular South has expanded in tandem with the astonishing growth of the industry. More than 137 million people in the U.S. have gone "wireless" in less than 20 years. By comparison, it took 72 years for U.S. landline telephones to reach the 30 million mark.

What was viewed in the 1980s as a cumbersome toy used only by business executives, is now ubiquitous. This small, trendy gadget can be found attached to the belts of teens and construction workers or fitting snugly in briefcases and purses that feature pockets designed just for the phone.

The people who thought they "needed" cell phones in the early years of wireless generally bought them for business use, and then, only for occasional, very important calls. With the phones themselves costing an average of \$800 for business models and more than \$2,000 for top of the line handheld models, and per minute charges hovering close to a dollar, the industry has a very narrow market.

Now in 2003, wireless carriers have expanded home coverage area, offering flat rate calling plans that alleviate many roaming and long distance fees. Per minute costs are calculated in cents rather than

dollars and handsets are smaller, more sophisticated and infinitely less expensive.

Though it has grown along with the industry, Cellular South has gone against the key trends of many wireless carriers toward mergers, acquisitions by national or international companies, and brand name changes. Its stability and continuity of operations has allowed the company to focus on one region of the country by building the highest quality networks and providing innovative features and service.

Cellular South was the first company to introduce analog, the original wireless technology, to many parts of Mississippi. Digital service was offered a few years later when dual-band, dual-mode phones were introduced.

Since 1999, the company has invested more than \$60 million in infrastructure throughout Mississippi alone, including networks, cellular towers, retail stores and administrative offices. Also in 1999, it became the first carrier to implement TDMA digital service statewide. The introduction of its Free Incoming Calls plan, in that same year, proved so popular that Cellular South immediately began planning for future installation of additional technology to accommodate the growth in voice traffic. In 2000, the company expanded outside of Mississippi for the first time, to Mobile, Alabama, and the Florida Panhandle.

Cellular South grew again in 2001, with its first wireless network in the Memphis Metro and Jackson, Tennessee, area. Featuring third generation wireless technology called Code Division Multiple Access 1xRTT (CDMA 1X), the network provides increased capacity for voice traffic, allowing customers to enjoy high call quality even as wireless phone usage experiences tremendous growth.

In 2002, CDMA technology was added to the Mississippi network, allowing the company to offer a new Unlimited Plan — including unlimited anytime calling minutes in a home coverage area with nationwide coverage.

Expansion plans continue even as Cellular South celebrates its 15th anniversary of business. The company now operates more than 85 retail locations, with 13 new retail locations planned in 2003. It also offers an online e-Store at [cellularsouth.com](http://cellularsouth.com), a wide network of authorized retailers and a company-operated toll-free Customer Care Center.

"As a company, we're proud of the progress we've made, especially of the impact Cellular South has made in our home state of Mississippi," said Meena. "Our goals for the future remain the same: focus on our core business values of improving the quality of life in the communities of The Cellular South, the area we call home, and providing our customers the best service and calling plans available."



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**Cellular South gets**  
**new Edgewater location**

Cellular South, the Jackson-based wireless provider, now has a new retail location inside Edgewater Mall in Biloxi. Details: (601) 974-7134.